

# INFORMATION

*For the Partners of the Manufactory at Leith, for making of Wool and Tow Cards.*

**T**Here being a Manufactory erected at *Leith*, for making Wool and Tow Cards, which were never formerly made in this Kingdom, they are now advanced, to that degree of perfection, that they are able to under-sell the whole Kingdom, and under-sell all imported new Cards; and for an evidence of it, they are willing to pass from the benefit of their Patent and Act of Parliament, and Proclamation of the Privy Council, in so far as the same do impose additional Duty, upon new imported Cards for many years yet to run.

The said Manufactory hath been much discouraged and prejudged, by the importing of old Cards tumbled up, and sold as new, to poor ignorant People, for small rates, which yet is a great Abuse imposed upon these that buy them.

The Inconveniency of this unwarrantable Trade, was foreseen by the Erectors of this Society, before they advanced their Stock, and for their Security, they obtained not only a Patent prohibiting the Importation of old Cards, but an Act of Parliament relative to their Patent, *in anno 1663*, and likewise an Act of Privy Council, *in anno 1689*, discharging the same.

The Importers of the said old Cards, have begun of late to justify that Abuse; and have presented an Act of Parliament, rescinding the former Act and Proclamation in favours of the Manufactory, which was remitted to the Committee for Fines and Forfeitures, and is now offered to the Committee of Trade, and long Papers have been Printed and Published upon that Subject, containing a number of extrinsick and impertinent stories, which were tedious and unprofitable to be resumed.

The Partners of the Manufactory, do therefore only represent the grounds both of Law and Expediency, for sustaining their Right, and encouraging them and other Undertakers, for advancing of Manufactories and Societies.

In the first place, they contend, that they are secured by the Laws of the Kingdom, that their Stock and Labour shall not be lost and destroyed by allowing this prohibited Trade: First, by an Act of Parliament made before the advancement of Stock, and by several Acts of Exchequer and Privy Council thereafter, and such Acts made partly with regard to the advancement of the Interest of the Kingdom, and partly with respect to privat Undertakers, they are not only publick Laws, but privat Rights to such as do advance their Stocks, and breed themselves and others, to the management of a special Trade upon the faith thereof. So that it were a breach of publick faith, to withdraw the Privileges and Immunities so given, by any posterior Law, unless such Privileges did import imminent Damage and Prejudice to the Nation. 2. Whereas the Papers formerly published, do bear, that the Act of Parliament is only temporary for 19 years now expyred, and that the Acts of Privy Council and Exchequer are no Laws. It is Answered, 1. The Act of Parliament consists of two parts, one  
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temporary, and another perpetual, the first doth impose an additional Duty on new Cards, thereby allowed to be imported, and this is temporary, for such a time as was hoped to be sufficient, to bring the Manufactory to that perfection, that they might sell as cheap as any new Cards could be imported: And therefore, the Parliament did exact Security from the Undertakers, that during thath space, they should furnish the Countrey at competent rates, but the other part prohibiting the Importation of old Cards is perpetual, because the Act did consider that to be an Abuse, imposed upon ignorant People: And notwithstanding of all these Incouragements, the Undertakers lost their Stock three several times, and as oft obliged to make up their Stock of new.

2. The Acts of Exchequer and Privy Council in this subject, are to be regarded as Laws, because the 40 Act, *Parl. 1661.* considering, that many things might occur, which would be necessary for the advancement of Manufactories, did therefore empower the Exchequer or Privy Council, to make such Orders, and grant such other Priviledges and Liberties, as they should think just; so that in that matter, the Privy Councils Act, hath the Commission and Authority of the Parliament: And therefore the Partners are humbly confident that the Parliament will not find it just or reasonable to deprive them of the benefit of these Laws, and of Acts and Proclamations conform to Law, which they look upon to be their privat Right.

The next point to be considered, is the expediency of the thing. And 1. Many of our Laws do fully expresse the Advantage and Interest of the Kingdom, by Incouraging of Manufactories; for thereby not only our Money is kept in the Country, and the natural Product consumed, but likewise many persons who would be idle Vagabonds, and burthensome to their native Country, are employed and become useful and profitable to it; and by the quality of their Patent, and an expresse Obligment upon the Undertakers, they were bound to breed up Scots Boys at the Trade, whereof they have bred a great many, and particularly the present Master, was an Apprentice in the said Work.

2. This Manufactory doth consume considerably of our Native Product; and albeit the Materials used in it be of very small Value, in ballance with the Labour and Industry of the Workmen who make the Cards, yet 500 *lib. Sterling* will not furnish the Calf-Skins employed in the Work, nor 200 *lib. Sterling* pay the Expence of Wrights in preparing Timber for Cards, besides Servants Wages.

3. This Manufactory is advanced to such a Perfection, that they are not only able to provide the Country, as well, and at as easie Rates, as any can be had from Abroad, but likewise to export with Profit; and there being but two Manufactories in the Kingdom that can use such Cards, *viz.* the Cloath-Manufactory at *New-Milns*, and the Manufactory in the *Cannongate* for making of Hats, both of these do satisfy themselves with the Cards made at *Leith*, whereof they have used a great quantity, and have emitted ample Declarations that they have found the same as good and sufficient for carrying on their Work, as these they got from *England*, or else where; and that old furnished Cards are not useful for them, nor will the Masters of the Work allow of them, being meer Cheats, trimmed up, after they are useless for Manufactories, and not serviceable to the Buyer; and the same Cards being generally used in the Country, all the substantial Merchants in the Bow, who sell them, have emitted the like Declaration, which doth sufficiently evince the Perfection to which the Work is improven, to the satisfaction of all with whom the Partners have dealing.

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By these Particulars, it is most evident and plain, that the said Manufactory is profitable to the Kingdom, and doth not exclude any other from sharing with them in the Benefit; and if that one Trick of importing old furbished Cards, were authorized, the Nation would be deprived of all that Benefit, and the Workmen employed, become wholly destitute and miserable, and the Partners Stock, which belongs to Orphans, would inevitably be lost; for these old furbished Cards, being used in Manufactories abroad, till they are useles there, they are bought at very inconsiderable Rates, and so being imported here, and appearing of some Value to the view, the Importers are able to under-sell, and the present advantage prevails most with the Poor, who who only use that Manufactory: By which means, these that are made in the Kingdom cannot be vended, and in a short while the Society must be dissolved, and the Nation served both with old and new from abroad; and whatever Favour or Connivance hath been granted to Importers, who are able to under-sell Manufactories, and provide the Nation with sufficient Ware: Yet it were against all Reason, to encourage Importers of old insufficient used Work, which is altogether inconsistent with, and destructive to Manufactories within the Kingdom, because it can never be supposed that they can sell new and sufficient Work at the Rate that old Furbished Cards, rendered useles by Manufactories abroad can be Imported: But the Partners have done, and are willing to do, all that could have been projected, *viz.* They are able to under-sell any new Cards that can be Imported, and they are willing to dress up and Furbish any of their own Work, when it hath been used; at very reasonable Rates.

The Partners do therefore conclude, that seeing they have not only advanced their Stock upon the Publick Faith of Laws, and several Acts of Exchequer and Privy Council, who are specially Authorized to grant Priviledges to the Erectors of Manufactories, but likeways they have advanced the Work to that perfection, that they are able to under-sell any imported new Cards, which they have attained by the loss of three several Stocks, and by long Diligence, and great Application: In these Circumstances they can never be affraid, that the Wisdom and Justice of the High Court of Parliament, will suffer the Rights and Priviledges provided to them by the foresaids Laws to be diminished or infringed; to the great Discouragement of all, who might undertake the like publick Work.

And as to the passing of the Importers of old Cards for five or six Dollars, after a Summons given them; or that the Boys of the Manufactory are bound longer than other Trades-Boys, is so great a Calumny, that it is not worthy of an Answer.